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ABSTRACT

A total of 72 children from the second, fifth, and eighth grades participated in an investigation of relations between children's moral reasoning about actions considered obligatory and discretionary. Assessments were made of children's evaluations and corresponding justifications of stimuli depicting two helping situations in each of which one condition involved low cost to the actor and another involved higher cost. Results showed that cost played a pivotal role in children's conception of obligation; that concerns of justice and welfare supported both obligatory and discretionary evaluations; and that praiseworthiness considerations increased when obligation ceased. As the children's ages increased, they drew on compensatory welfare reasoning and demonstrated a psychological understanding of praise. Forty-four references and six tables are provided. (RH)

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Relations between Obligatory and Discretionary Morality: A Social-Cognitive Developmental Analysis

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Abstract

This study examined relations between children's moral reasoning about actions considered obligatory (required and generalized) and discretionary (morally worthy, but neither required nor generalized). Seventy-two children (36 girls, 36 boys) from the second, fifth, and eighth grades participated. Assessments were made of children's evaluations and corresponding justifications of stimuli depicting two helping situations where, in each, one condition involved low cost to the actor and a second condition higher cost. The results showed that cost played a pivotal role in children's conception of obligation, that concerns of justice and welfare supported both obligatory and discretionary evaluations, and that praiseworthiness considerations increased when obligation ceased. With increasing age, children drew on compensatory welfare reasoning and demonstrated a psychological understanding of praise.

Relations between Obligatory and Discretionary Morality: A Social-Cognitive Developmental Analysis

Positive actions which help other people have been defined broadly in terms of prosocial behavior, and in the last two decades have undergone extensive research (e.g., Feshback, 1982; Grusec, 1981; Hoffman, 1979; Rushton, 1982; Staub, 1971). In recent years, however, it has been proposed that not enough attention has been paid to what defines the term (Krebs, 1983; Radke-Yarrow, Zahn-Waxler, & Chapman, 1983; Smetana, Bridgeman, & Turiel, 1983). For instance, in one study (Bar-Tal, 1976) prosocial behavior was measured as helping another person who collapses in a subway, in another study (see Mussen & Eisenberg, 1977) as helping pick up pencils that an experimenter "accidentally" drops. If we accept Kreb's critique (1983), it is unlikely that both prosocial behaviors stem from the same motivations or represent similar classes of acts.

In her research on children's prosocial reasoning, Eisenberg (1979, 1982) provides helpful specificity of the term. She defined as prosocial a judgment where the needs of one or more persons was in conflict with self, in social contexts where "the role of authorities and their dictates, rules, laws, formal obligations and punishment was minimal" (1982, p. 5). In turn, this definition provides a basis for an important distinction between two moral orientations. On the one hand, Eisenberg has found that moral reasoning can entail discretionary choices, where a particular action, while morally worthy, is not required. This finding is consistent with other research on gender differences which has described discretionary orientations that entail interpersonal commitments and care (Baumrind, 1986; Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 1984). On the other hand, a good deal of other research has shown that individuals make obligatory judgments about how -- from the moral point of view -- individuals ought to act in relation to other individuals (Damon, 1977; Kohlberg, 1971; Piaget, 1932; Rest, 1983; Turiel, 1983).

Though these two orientations have largely been examined separately, there appear to exist tensions and similarities between them. For instance, McGuire (1985) suggests that as personal costs increase, what initially appears as a

positive moral obligation to help a person in need changes to discretionary morality:

> The most primitive notion of a universal human obligation may be that of the good Samaritan. Face to face, here and now, one person can help another. The cost is trivial, the benefit immense. Therefore the person in a position to help is morally obliged to do so. But now repeat the scenario, adding more and more needy persons to the picture. Eventually the giver must stagger and collapse under the burden (p. 202).

In other words, it is possible that obligatory and discretionary moral judgments differ on the criteria that define each term, yet are closely aligned along a moral judgment see-saw, so to speak, where factors such as personal cost can tip a judgment from one to the other.

In this study relations between children's conceptions of obligatory and discretionary judgments were examined.[1] Following a substantial body of philosophical literature (e.g., Kant, 1785/1964; Gewirth, 1978; Rawls, 1971) and psychological research (e.g., Kohlberg, 1971; Turiel, 1983), moral obligation was assessed as entailing a judgment of the act being required (necessary to perform), and generalized (required of people in another geographical location, even though they act otherwise). The term discretionary was applied to those judgments that entailed neither a requirement nor generalization. Based on these definitions, children were presented with two situations that were weighted toward establishing positive moral obligation. Both obligations were promoted (Condition 1) by highlighting the welfare needs of a destitute family and showing that the family's situation could be improved at small personal cost to the agent. Both stories were than changed (Condition 2) such that the personal cost increased.

Three major issues were examined. The first, mentioned above, concerns the possibility that obligatory judgments could shift to discretionary as personal costs increased. The second issue concerns the reasons children use to justify their obligatory and discretionary judgments. Previous research has shown that both obligatory orientations (Nucci, 1981; Smetana, 1982; Turiel, 1979, 1983) and discretionary orientations (Eisenberg, 1982; Hoffman, 1979) include justifications centered around other's welfare. Less clear, however, is whether justice

reasoning can come to bear on discretionary judgments. If so, it would suggest a broader application of justice concepts than usually is attributed. Finally, drawing on a distinction made as early as Aristotle between just action and just character (see Williams, 1981, chapter 6), children's moral views toward agents performing obligatory and discretionary acts were assessed in terms of praiseworthiness. It was expected that agents performing both obligatory and discretionary moral actions would engender some praise, but that those performing discretionary actions more praise, as such actions would more strongly reflect admirable qualities of a person's character.

Method

Subjects

Seventy-two subjects participated in this study. There were twenty-four children (12 males and 12 females) in each of three grade levels: 2nd, 5th, and 8th (mean ages, 8.3, 11.0, and 13.11). The children were selected from three schools in largely working class neighborhoods in the surrounding San Francisco Bay Area.

Procedures and Measures

Each child was administered a semi-structured interview lasting approximately 45 minutes. Among three stories presented, the two stories reported on today (see Footnote 1) concerned positive morality. One story (for future reference called Lunch Story) portrays as the protagonist a student, who is the same age as the subject, on his way to school with a week's worth of lunch money, $5.00. On the way, he meets a poor woman and her three children who have not eaten in a day or two. In Condition 1, the poor woman asks the protagonist for 20 cents so they could get a bit of food. In Condition 2, the poor woman asks the protagonist for the whole five dollars. In the second story (for future reference called Raffle Story), the protagonist, again the same age as the subject, wins $100.00 in a raffle contest. The protagonist and his older sister go to the contest office to pick up the money. On the way home, they meet (as in the Lunch Story) a poor woman and her three children who have not eaten for a day or two. In Condition 1, the poor woman asks the protagonist for $1.00 so as to buy some food. In Condition 2, the woman asks the protagonist for the whole $100.00. Thus in both

stories, Condition 1 is weighted toward establishing positive obligation by presenting stimuli where there is significant benefit to a needy family at minimal personal cost to the agent. In contrast, Condition 2 is weighted toward discretionary morality by increasing the personal cost. The main difference between the stories is that in the lunch story the agent's cost is in terms of physical welfare (food for lunch) while in the raffle story the agent's cost is in terms of non-essential material welfare (extra money won in a raffle contest that would likely be used to buy special items like a bicycle or extra clothes). It was expected that the two stories, on the whole, would act as repeated measures on the basis of evaluations and supporting justifications.

The two stories were presented as part of a set of three stories (see Footnote 1), which were counterbalanced based on all six permutations within each subgroup of age by sex. After presentation of each story, subjects were asked questions to determine their comprehension. All but one of the youngest subjects (subsequently dropped from the study and replaced) comprehended each of the stories. After each story and in each condition subjects were posed with a series of questions pertaining to the issues under study. To assess discretionary and obligatory judgments, subjects were asked to evaluate whether the positive act should be commended (e.g., "Should Tom give the woman the 20 cents?"), whether the positive act should be required (e.g., "Would it be all right if Tom doesn't give the woman any money?"), and whether the requirement judgment generalized (Let's say people in X [a city named by the subject that was thought to be a long ways away that they had never been to] in a similar situation would not give the 20 cents, is that all right or not all right?"). Finally, to assess praiseworthiness, subjects were asked whether the protagonist should be praised for performing the act (e.g., "If Tom did give the woman the 20 cents, is this something that should be talked about as something really good that somebody did, a little good, or nothing special at all?").

Coding and Reliability

Coding manuals were first formulated from the responses of 50% of the subjects (a total of 36 subjects, with 12 from each age group). The coding manuals were applied to the responses from the other 50% of the subjects. The

results from both groups were combined for analyses. Two types of responses were coded. The evaluative responses were coded for content choices as determined by type of question (e.g., should/should not, all right/not all right). The justifications for the evaluative questions were scored with a coding system adapted from Davidson, Turiel, and Black (1983) and Kahn and Turiel (in press). Summary descriptions on the most general level of the justification coding system are presented in Table 2. Finally, it should be noted that reliability by a second independent scorer has yet to be performed.

Results

Responses coded dichotomously (e.g., praiseworthy/not praiseworthy) with no division within the independent variable were analyzed based on the Binomial Distribution. Responses coded dichotomously with two divisions within the independent variable (e.g., male and female) were analyzed with Fischer's exact test. Responses coded dichotomously with three ordered divisions within the independent variable (e.g., 2nd, 5th, and 8th grade) were analyzed with Kendall's Tau. Finally, McNemar's statistic for repeated measures was used to determine if subjects changed in particular evaluations across conditions.

Since a large body of the analyses consisted of analyzing cross-classification tables, and given that the usual method entails testing relations between variables taken one pair at a time (see Green, 1988), a potential problem arises in setting the alpha rate for each test. A conservative approach to this problem would be to set the alpha rate for type I errors (false positives) for each test at .05 divided by the number of tests, either within the entire study, or, less conservatively, within an individual issue. However, given that this study sought largely to extend rather than confirm previous research, as much attention needs to be paid to the problem of Type II errors (false negatives) as Type I errors (Marascuilo, personal communication; cf. Marascuilo, Onelich, and Gokhale, in press). Thus each test was conducted at the .05 level.

Act evaluations and justifications.

As presented in Table 1, results showed that in Condition 1 of both stories 100% of the children commended giving the money, and a little over 40% of the

children believed that giving the money was required or a generalized requirement (Lunch Story: 41% required, 46% generalized requirement; Raffle Story: 42% required, 42% generalized requirement). In contrast, for the large majority of children, the act in Condition 2 for both stories was not commended, required, or conceived of as a generalized requirement (Lunch Story: 6% commended, 1% required, 1% generalized requirement; Raffle Story: 10% commended, 3% required, 3% generalized requirement).

As defined earlier, obligation was established by a judgment that requires and generalizes the requirement of the act, while discretionary judgments neither require nor generalize. Thus the above evaluation percentages were retabulated according to these definitions, and then examined for a shift in obligation between conditions. In Condition 1, 42% of the children conceived of giving the lunch money as obligatory, and 40% in the Raffle story. In Condition 2, the large majority of children of this obligatory subgroup changed to a discretionary judgment. In the Lunch Story, 96% of the subjects changed from obligatory to discretionary. $X^2_M = 21.04$, $p < .001$. In the Raffle Story, 91% changed. $X^2_M = 18.05$, $p < .001$.

Children's justifications for their act evaluations regarding commendation and requirement were coded with the categories in Table 2. Table 3 presents the corresponding percentages of justifications for acts that were commended or required. Within each category used by more than ten percent of children, tests for sex-differences were performed. Of the 31 tests, only one was significant. (For the Raffle Story, Condition 2, more boys than girls provided agent's welfare justifications for not requiring the act.) Thus results were collapsed by sex, and, in turn, showed patterns for frequency of justification use. For both stories, over 90% of the justifications for commending the act in Condition 1 centered on issues of human welfare. Averaging percentages across stories (and considering here only justifications used in a proportion equal to or greater than 10%), 23% of the children commended the act because it would not substantively impinge on the protagonist's welfare (agent's welfare justification), 40% because of the family's need (other's welfare), and 28% based on a coordination between agents's welfare and other's welfare (welfare in compensation). A roughly similar

pattern occurred for children who conceived of the act in Condition 1 as required, except that 17% of the justifications were based on character traits such as generosity and unselfishness (agent-centered).

In contrast, different justifications were used for children who did not require the act in Condition 1. Averaging again across stories, 10% of the children did not require the act because it comes within an individual's personal prerogative (personal), 18% because the act impinged too seriously on the protagonist's welfare (agent's welfare), and, most importantly, 60% because the act infringed on claims based on rights, fairness, ownership, or merit (justice).

Justifications for not commending the act in Condition 2 showed some differences between stories. While 74% of the children in the Lunch Story believed the act impinged too seriously on the protagonist's welfare, only 29% believed so in the Raffle Story. In turn, while only 8% brought to bear justice concerns in the Lunch Story, 34% did so in the Raffle Story. Finally, justifications for not requiring the act in Condition 2, across stories, entailed agent's welfare (34%), justice (22%), personal (15%), and mitigating welfare circumstances (14%).

Age differences were found within the use of the welfare in compensation justification. With increasing age children increasingly relied on this justification for commending the act in Condition 1 across both stories. In the Lunch Story, 21% of children's justifications comprised welfare in compensation, compared to 38% for 5th graders, and 54% for 8th graders. Kendall's tau c = -.30, $p < .02$. In the Raffle Story, 4% of children's justifications comprised welfare in compensation, compared to 33% for 5th graders, and 61% for 8th graders. Kendall's tau c = -.50, $p < .0001$.

Praiseworthiness evaluations and justifications.

Across all four conditions, evaluation results showed that over 90% of the children provided praiseworthy evaluations: Lunch Story, Condition 1 (93%), Condition 2 (91%); Raffle Story, Condition 1 (93%), Condition 2 (94%). Binomial probabilities are all well under $p < .01$. Moreover, in this assessment, distinctions were made between moderate praise (a "little good" or "good" response) and strong praise ("really good"). For Condition 1, for both stories,

the results showed, on the whole, that 8th graders provided predominantly moderate praiseworthiness evaluations, while 2nd and 5th graders split roughly evenly across moderate and strong praiseworthiness. In particular, as shown in Table 4, in the Lunch Story as the age of the group increased, from 2nd grade (57%) to 5th grade (70%) to 8th grade (91%), there was increasing use of the moderate praiseworthiness evaluation. Kendall's tau b = -.3105; $p < .01$. In the Raffle story, 8th graders (95%) more so than 5th graders (41%) and 2nd graders (59%) combined provided evaluations of moderate and not strong praiseworthiness: Raffle Story, Fischer's exact test, $p < .0002$. For Condition 2, of children across ages who provided praiseworthiness evaluations, a significant majority (Lunch Story, 75%; Raffle Story, 79%) provided evaluations of strong praiseworthiness: Binomial distribution, Lunch Story, $p = .05$; Raffle Story, $p < .01$. Finally, results across conditions were compared to determine if a significant number of children who provided moderate praiseworthiness evaluations in Condition 1 changed to strong praiseworthiness evaluations in Condition 2. Tests were significant for both stories. In the Lunch Story, $X^2_M = 23.59$, $p < .001$. In the Raffle Story, $X^2_M = 14.58$, $p < .001$.

Children's praiseworthiness justifications were coded with the categories in Table 2. As can be noted in this Table, the majority of coded justifications are act-centered, meaning they justify the rightness or wrongness of acts, and include such appeals as agent's welfare, other's welfare, justice, and personal choice. In contrast, one of the justifications is called agent-centered where there is an appeal to (often long term) personal characteristics of the agent, including unelaborated virtue, generosity, sacrifice, and supererogation. In other words, act-centered justifications emphasize the rightness or wrongness of acts, and, in terms of praise, praise the act (e.g., "[It's] real good...They wouldn't starve no more"). In contrast, agent-centered justifications emphasize the goodness or badness of the individual performer of acts, and, in terms of praise, praise the actor (e.g., "It'd be really good. That takes a lot of character. To give up a hundred dollars...I would be like really surprised and I would like sort of admire that person for doing that").

An analysis was performed on the basis of this distinction. Multiple justifications were eliminated by coding agent-centered instead of act-centered justifications whenever both were used. The results showed a significant and generalized developmental finding across both stories and both conditions. As shown by Table 5, younger subjects used a larger percentage of act-centered justifications and older subjects a larger percentage of agent centered justifications. In particular, in the Lunch Story, Condition 1, 37% of the 2nd graders provided agent-centered justifications, compared to 73% of the 5th graders and 81% of the 8th graders. Kendall's tau c = .38, $p < .005$. In the Raffle Story, Condition 1, agent-centered justifications were used by 41% of the 2nd graders, 74% of the 5th graders, and 94% of the 8th graders. Kendall's tau c = .47, $p < .0003$. In the Lunch Story, Condition 2, agent-centered justifications were used by 50% of the 2nd graders, 65% of the 5th graders, and 100% of the 8th graders. Kendall's tau c = .44, $p < .001$. Sex differences were found within the second grade where a greater percentage of females than males provided agent-centered reasoning. Fisher's exact test, $p < .02$. Finally, in the Raffle Story, Condition 2, agent-centered justifications were used by 47% of the 2nd graders, 71% of the 5th graders, and 94% of the 8th graders. Kendall's tau c = .42, $p < .003$.

Based on further analysis, the agent-centered justification was divided into two subgroups, with unelaborated virtues and benevolence comprising one group (called simple agent-centered justifications), and sacrifice and supererogation comprising the second group (called complex agent-centered). As shown by Table 6, based on this division, across stories and conditions, 8th graders used complex agent-centered justifications to a greater degree than did 2nd and 5th graders (as a combined group). In the Lunch Story, Condition 1, 96% of the younger group's agent-centered justifications comprised simple agent-centered justifications, compared to 47% for the oldest group, $p < .0007$. In the Raffle Story, Condition 1, 96% to 65%, $p < .01$. In the Lunch Story, Condition 2, 65% to 35%, $p < .10$ (marginally significant). Finally, in the Raffle Story, Condition 2, 85% to 50%, $p < .02$.

Discussion

In some recent work, Scheffler (1986) defines moral stringency as a property of a moral view being very demanding within its area of application. The results of this study suggest, in a broad sense, that children do not hold to a stringent conception of positive morality. This interpretation is supported by two major findings. More than half of the children conceived of the situation where help could be provided to a destitute family at little personal cost (Condition 1) as discretionary rather than obligatory. Second, of those children who viewed the Condition 1 act as obligatory, virtually every child changed their judgment to discretionary when personal costs to the agent increased (Condition 2).

Children's justifications provide insight into the relations between obligatory and discretionary judgments. For children who viewed the act in Condition 1 as required (a central criterion of obligation) the large majority of corresponding justifications included other's welfare, agent's welfare, welfare in compensation, and agent-centered. In contrast, of the children who did not require the act, other's welfare, welfare in compensation, and agent-centered played virtually no role, and agent's welfare a reduced role, while the majority of justifications entailed issues of justice. These results suggest that both welfare and justice concerns differentially support both obligatory and discretionary positive judgments in situations where the agent's cost is minimal. In particular, the finding that justice concepts played a central role in establishing discretionary morality suggests that such concepts may be more pervasive than some research has indicated (Eisenberg, 1982; Gilligan, 1982). In turn, the finding that obligatory judgments drew in some measure on agent-centered reasoning suggests that children can, though do not often, conceptualize obligatory acts within a virtue framework: a philosophical endeavor which continues to receive attention (MacIntyre, 1984).

While approximately equal numbers of children considered the Condition 1 act as obligatory or discretionary, all the children commended the act. This feature of commendation is probably necessary for the idea of obligation, in that it is difficult to pose a situation where one would morally require an act without commending it. However, the results show commendation is not necessary for the

idea of discretion: In Condition 1, discretionary judgments entailed commendation, while in Condition 2, discretionary judgments did not.

An objection could be raised at this point, if not before, that what is being called discretionary morality -- particularly where the act in question is not even being commended -- while agreeably discretionary is arguably morality. It is on this point that attention can be turned to Williams' proposal (1985) that there may be actions that are

> heroic or very fine actions, which go beyond what is obligatory or demanded. Or they may be actions that from a ethical point of view it would be agreeable or worthwhile or a good idea to do, without one's being required to do them. The point is obvious in terms of people's reactions. People may be greatly admired, or merely well thought of, for actions they would not be blamed for omitting (p. 179).

Williams points out that one obvious way to assess whether a non-obligatory action is worthwhile from a moral perspective is to assess whether the action would be greatly admired or well thought of (see, also, Hunt, 1987).

In this study, an assessment of admiration or worthwhileness was made in terms of praiseworthiness: whether children thought the protagonist of the story should be praised for performing the positive moral act. Results showed that across all four conditions, regardless of their stance on the positive act being obligatory or discretionary, that performing the act was conceived of as praiseworthy for the large majority of children (over 90%). In addition, based on an assessment of the degree of praiseworthiness, the results showed that children who provided moderate praiseworthiness evaluations in Condition 1 provided strong praiseworthiness evaluations in Condition 2. Taken together, these findings suggest that while actions which help other people (in terms of physical and material welfare) are conceived of as praiseworthy -- pointing to a moral orientation -- there is inverse relation between degree of praiseworthiness and obligation: Praiseworthiness increases when obligation ceases. This relation assumes, of course, the conditions presented in the study where there were significant welfare benefits to others, and where the costs impinge on, but not excessively, the agent's welfare.

While the large majority of children provided praiseworthiness evaluations, the findings need to be understood within the context of what children mean by praise. Recall that in the interview children were posed with questions pertaining to whether they would praise the person for performing the act. Results showed that younger children provided more act-centered justifications, while older children more agent-centered justifications. In other words, while younger children readily engaged in dialogue about this issue, they consistently talked about praising the act and not the person. These findings suggest that compared to older children, and presumably adults, younger children have a less psychologically and internally based understanding of praise (cf. Selman, 1980; Shantz, 1975; Wellman, 1985).

Moreover, younger children's understanding of praise was found limited even when they provided agent-centered justifications. Results showed that 2nd and 5th graders provided primarily simple agent-centered justifications, while 8th graders provided both simple and complex agent-centered justifications in roughly equal proportion. One explanation for this finding is that sacrifice and supererogation, which comprise agent-centered justifications, each entail a coordination of two social effects into a compensatory relation. In particular, sacrifice entails a giving up of personal considerations with a reciprocal gain by the beneficiary ("Because he went without something so that someone else could have food"). Supererogation possibly entails a coordination of individual actions (giving the money) with the negation of that action (not giving the money) in light of some standard population ("Because some people wouldn't give it to that lady, and they would just leave that lady without any money").

This idea of a coordination of two social effects into a compensatory relation may also explain why older but not younger children primarily provided welfare in compensation justifications: the justification, by definition, entails a coordination of cost to self and benefit to other. These developmental findings are consistent with a range of other social-developmental research which shows that with increasing age children integrate social factors by establishing reciprocal relations (Bigelow, 1977; Kahn and Turiel, in press; Piaget, 1932; Rotenberg, 1980; Selman, 1980).

Finally, in agreement with other research (e.g., Laupa & Turiel, 1986; Tisak, 1986; Tisak & Turiel, 1984; Turiel, 1983), no gender differences were found in relation to the use of the justice and welfare justifications. This finding is of particular interest in that positive helping situations where the need of others is salient could highlight such differences (e.g., that boys emphasize justice and girls welfare [Gilligan, 1982]). Instead, the results support the proposition that boys and girls -- at least in terms of reasoning -- are both oriented to caring and justice, and that these orientations can differentially come to bear depending on the moral context.

Footnotes

[1]Due to space limitations of this paper, only data are reported that pertain to reasoning about positive obligatory and discretionary moral acts, where the agent performs an action (e.g., to help a person in physical need). The reader should recognize, however, that these relations were also examined in the context of and contrasted to negative morality, where the agent refrains from action (e.g., not to steal). Thus the data reported on today fit within an analysis (in progress) that comprises a wider set of research methods and sphere of conceptual issues.

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Table 1. Percent of Subjects by Story and Condition Who Commended, Required, and Generalized the Requirement of the Act.

	To Give Lunch Money		To Give Raffle Money	
Evaluation	Cond. 1	Cond. 2	Cond. 1	Cond. 2
Commended	100	6	100	10
Required	41	1	42	3
Generalized Required	46	1	42	3

Table 2. Summary of Justification Categories and Illustrative Responses.

Category	Description (Sample Responses in Parentheses)
Other's Welfare	Appeal to the physical, material, or psychological welfare of others ("Because she has four kids who haven't eaten for a while").
Agent's Welfare	Appeal to the physical, material or psychological welfare of the agent ("Because you need three meals a day to get all the vitamins and food you need").
Welfare in Compensation	Appeal wherein the physical, material, or psychological welfare of other and agent are balanced with one another ("Because he would still have something for breakfast and dinner and the lady would still have all of the money to buy food"), including appeals to reversibility of roles ("If that ever happened to me, I'd like someone to do that for me").
Mitigating Welfare Circumstances	Appeal to an interpretation whereby the initial welfare claim is deflected based on ineffective methods ("Because with twenty cents you can't buy much food, so if he didn't give her twenty cents, it wouldn't be a big loss"), already having provided welfare ("Because even just giving her what he gave her, that's still good, because it shows that he'd be willing to help out the people that are less fortunate"), not legitimate welfare needs ("Why should we give the dollar to the woman? -- she has survived so far"), and alternative welfare solutions ("No matter how bad off you are, there are places that you can get help").
Justice	Appeal to rights and fairness, potentially in the context of notions of equilibrium between individuals' competing claims ("That doesn't give her the right to take it away. Because she had hers, that's hers, that's his, that's the plain

	fact"), as well as appeals to ownership ("Because it's her money") and merit ("She earned it; she went to the trouble to enter the raffle and everything").
Mitigating Justice Circumstances	Appeal to an interpretation whereby the initial justice claim is deflected based on the locus of responsibility ("Because Mary, she's one person, and the lady with the four children is another. It's the lady with the four children's problem to get the children and herself food, it's not Mary's") and excessive sacrifice ("That's just a thirteen-year-old; the hundred dollars is a lot for anyone").
Personal	Appeal to individual preferences or prerogatives ("It's the own person's decision"), individual non-essential interests ("Because there are things that you might want to do with the money, whether you need it really or not") and desirable opportunities to the agent ("Because it's your luck, you should take advantage of it, because it's like a chance in a lifetime").
Agent-Centered	Appeals that are centered around often long-term personal characteristics, including unelaborated virtue and vice ("Because then she'd be selfish and greedy"), benevolence ("Because you're helping out someone who is really in desperate need of it"), sacrifice ("Because he went without something so that someone else could have food"), and supererogation ("Because it was like above and beyond. She didn't have to do it, but she did").
Authority	Appeal to the existence of an authority or authority's power ("Nobody's gonna make him") or formal rule or law ("It's against the law"; "It's one of the ten commandments").
Unelaborated	Appeal to the act or some if its features ("Because it's not a big thing"), including reference to act appropriateness or inappropriateness ("It's not a very nice thing to do").

Table 3. Percent of Justifications by Condition, Act Evaluation, and Story Type (Lunch Story [L] and Raffle Story [R]).

	Condition 1						Condition 2			
	Commended		Required		Not Required		Not Commended		Not Required	
Justification	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R
Other's Welfare	37	42	53	24	0	0	3	0	0	0
Agent's Welfare	23	23	13	21	23	13	74	29	39	29
Welfare in Compensation	31	26	16	21	0	0	5	4	10	3
Mitigating Welfare Circumstances	1	0	0	0	9	7	5	5	16	12
Justice	0	4	0	6	52	67	8	34	16	29
Mitigating Justice Circumstances	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	10	3	3
Agent-centered	5	3	13	21	2	0	0	0	0	0
Personal	0	1	0	0	11	9	1	18	10	21
Authority	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	6	0
Unelaborated	2	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	3

Notes. (1) Justifications are not reported for act evaluations where 10% or less of the subjects supported the evaluation. (2) Some subjects gave multiple justifications. All justifications were coded for each subject.

Table 4. Percent of Subjects by Age who Thought Act was Moderately Praiseworthy or Strongly Praiseworthy in Four Situations: Lunch Story, Condition 1 (L1); Raffle Story, Condition 1 (R1); Lunch Story, Condition 2 (L2); and Raffle Story, Condition 2 (R2).

	2nd				5th				8th			
Evaluation	L1	R1	L2	R2	L1	R1	L2	R2	L1	R1	L2	R2
Moderately Praiseworthy	57	59	20	19	70	41	45	26	91	95	13	18
Strongly Praiseworthy	43	41	80	81	30	59	55	74	9	5	87	82

Table 5. Percent of Subjects' Act-centered and Agent-centered Justifications by Grade for their Praiseworthiness Evaluation in Four Situations: Lunch Story, Condition 1 (L1); Raffle Story, Condition 1 (R1); Lunch Story, Condition 2 (L2); and Raffle Story, Condition 2 (R2).

	2nd				5th				8th			
Justification	L1	R1	L2	R2	L1	R1	L2	R2	L1	R1	L2	R2
Act-Centered	63	59	50	53	27	26	35	29	19	6	0	6
Agent-Centered	37	41	50	47	73	74	65	71	81	94	100	94

Table 6. Percent of Subjects' Simple and Complex Agent-centered Justifications by Grade for their Praiseworthiness Evaluation in Four Situations: Lunch Story, Condition 1 (L1); Raffle Story, Condition 1 (R1); Lunch Story, Condition 2 (L2); and Raffle Story, Condition 2 (R2).

	2nd & 5th				8th			
Justification	L1	R1	L2	R2	L1	R1	L2	R2
Simple Agent-centered	96	96	65	85	47	65	35	50
Complex Agent-centered	4	4	35	15	53	35	65	50